

10. (New) The orally ingestible product according to claim 9 wherein the flavor is selected from the group consisting of astringency, pungency, sourness and flavor of powdered milk.

11. (New) The orally ingestible product according to claim 9 wherein the odor is selected from the group consisting of soybean smell, fishy smell, vegetable smell, smell of garlic, smell of old rice, smell of konjak jelly, smell of vitamin, smell of retort-pouched product, smell of animal meat and smell of powdered milk.

12. (New) The orally ingestible product according to claim 9 wherein the orally ingestible product is selected from the group consisting of grated horseradish, Kimchi, grated Japanese radish, vinegar, pickled Ume, lemon juice, soya milk, foods containing soybean protein, vegetable juice, tomato juice, grated garlic, old rice, konjak jelly, foods containing vitamin B group, retort-pouched foods, mutton and foods containing powdered skim milk.

13. (New) A method for masking at least one of an odor and a flavor other than a bitter flavor, of a material having said at least one of an odor and a flavor other than a bitter flavor, in an orally ingestible product, comprising adding a nontoxic salt of gluconic acid to said product.

14. (New) The method according to claim 13 wherein the flavor is selected from the group consisting of astringency, pungency, sourness and flavor of powdered milk.

15. (New) The method according to claim 13 wherein the odor is selected from the group consisting of soybean smell, fishy smell, vegetable smell, smell of garlic, smell of old rice, smell of konjak jelly, smell of vitamin, smell of retort-pouched product, smell of animal meat and smell of powdered milk.

16. (New) The method according to claim 13 wherein the orally ingestible product is selected from the group consisting of grated horseradish, Kimchi, grated Japanese radish,

B1 vinegar, pickled Ume, lemon juice, soya milk, foods containing soybean protein, vegetable juice, tomato juice, grated garlic, old rice, konjak jelly, foods containing vitamin B group, retort-pouched foods, mutton and foods containing powdered skim milk.

DISCUSSION OF THE AMENDMENT

All of the claims have been cancelled and replaced with new Claims 9-16. Claim 9 is based on Claim 1. Claim 13 is based on Claim 5. In addition, the new claims positively exclude a bitter flavor. The exclusion of a bitter flavor is supported by the disclosure of bitterness at, for example, page 5, line 14 of the specification, and In re Johnson, 558 F.2d 1008, 194 USPQ 187 (CCPA 1977) (holding that a claim to a genus with a recital of a negative proviso that did not appear in the specification complied with the *description* requirement.) The dependent claims are supported in the specification beginning at page 5, line 14, and particularly the Examples.

No new matter is believed to have been added by the above amendment. Claims 9-16 are now pending in the application.

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the courtesy extended to Applicants' attorney during the interview held March 26, 2002, in the above-identified application. During the interview, Applicants' attorney discussed the presently-disclosed invention and differences between it and the prior art. The discussion is summarized and expanded-upon below.

The rejections of Claims 1-8 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as anticipated by WO98/23166 (Gudas et al), and under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by GB1299135 (Cumberland Packing), are respectfully traversed. Both references disclose the use of sodium gluconate as